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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4057
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RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI IMMEDIATE 2080
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR IMMEDIATE 1761
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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
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SUBJECT: JUD CHIEF ORDERED RELEASED

¶1. (SBU) After more than five months of house arrest, the Lahore High Court (LHC) ordered the release of Jammatt-ud-Dawa (JUD) Chief Hafiz Mohammad Saeed, who had been placed in preventive detention since the Mumbai attacks. After a series of delays, a full bench of the LHC heard a habeas corpus petition against his detention, with his counsel arguing his house arrest was illegal and a violation of human rights. According to press statements, Saeed's counsel, AK Dogar is quoted as saying, "the court has ordered that the detention of Hafiz Saeed was a violation of the constitution and the law of this country." The LHC ruling overturns earlier decisions by a judicial panel of the court, which had allowed the government to extend Hafiz Saeed's detention.

¶2. (SBU) The provincial government had earlier cautioned that the LHC was likely to order Hafiz Saeed's release owing to the inability of the federal government to provide sufficient concrete evidence linking Hafiz Saeed personally or JUD as an organization to the November attacks in Mumbai. As recently as May 21, Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif had stated that absent clear evidence, the LHC was unlikely to give the government any additional leeway on the preventive detention.

¶3. (SBU) Poloff spoke with the Punjab Home Secretary Nadeem Hasan Asif, who confirmed that the release has been ordered but who was still awaiting the order from the court before taking action. Asif was not in a position to comment on the expected date/time of Saeed's release until orders from the court were received. Local police contacts stated that they had not/not yet received any directives relating to the court order or Saeed's continued oversight. They expected that federal agencies would assume any monitoring of Saeed following his release from house arrest.

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